

Kentucky Teacher

December 2006 - January 2007

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

www.education.ky.gov

Terrance Green
Franklin County High School
First year in the classroom



Marks-Johns receives Milken Educator award



LaMesa Marks-Johns, left, shows her students at Shacklette Elementary School (Jefferson County) an enlarged check for \$25,000, which symbolizes the award she will receive later this school year for being named a Milken Family Foundation National Educator.

mittee and the CHAMPS school discipline program committee. She is active in the community, working with youth through her church and a community center.

Shacklette Principal Mary Keith nominated Marks-Johns for the award. Keith said the 4th-grade teacher "... is dedicated to ensuring that all students succeed academically. She has very high expectations for all students in the classroom and is an outstanding educator. Our school's writing, reading and science scores have all gone up since she began teaching 4th grade."

Marks-Johns will receive a check for \$25,000 at the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in Los Angeles next May. There are no restrictions on the use of the award. Winners may use the money in any way they choose.

The Milken National Educator Award provides public recognition and a cash
See MARKS-JOHNs on Page 9

By Lisa Y. Gross

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LaMesa Marks-Johns, Ed.D., a 4th-grade teacher at Shacklette Elementary School (Jefferson County), is Kentucky's latest recipient of the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award, which includes a financial reward of \$25,000. She received

the award at her school in late October from former Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit and representatives from the Milken Family Foundation.

Marks-Johns has been a teacher for five years and is a member of Shacklette's Instructional Leadership Team, the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan Com-

State board approves using ACT in high school accountability data

By Cathy Lindsey

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All 11th graders in Kentucky's public high schools will be required to take the ACT starting in the 2007-08 school year. At its December meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education approved a state regulation aimed at incorporating ACT scores into its annual assessments at the high school level.

This action is the result of Senate Bill 130, passed during the 2006 General Assembly. The law requires that the ACT exam be administered to students in grade 11. It also requires that the state's accountability system include a high school readiness exam (EXPLORE) in grade 8 and a college readiness exam (PLAN) in grade 10. The law establishes that these exams be used in lieu of a norm-referenced test.

Under the plan approved, the ACT would count as 5 percent of the high school accountability score during the 2006-07 school year based on scores computed from the PLAN. In the 2007-08 school year, the ACT would count as 5 percent of the high school accountability score computed from both PLAN and ACT scores.

Meanwhile, the Kentucky Department of Education will oversee a study of alignment and integration issues with the ACT and the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT). The board's goal is to merge items that align into the KCCT in the spring of 2009.

A Kentucky scale combining ACT/KCCT items would be used to calculate an academic index for accountability to be applied in 2008-09 and from that point forward. This would include an ACT index at the high school level for 2008-09 and in the future, computed from both PLAN and ACT.

A public hearing will be held on the regu-

See STATE on Page 10

You can register now for KTLC07

Conference registration for the 2007 Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference (KTLC07) is now open. And, as in past years, conference planners are offering several ways for Kentucky educators to register

and save money doing it. KTLC07 will be held March 7-9, 2007, at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville.

Kentucky educators who register for KTLC07 through Feb. 20, 2007, will receive a pre-registration discount. Again for KTLC07, when five or more people from one school register as a team to attend the full conference, one member of the team will receive free registration.

Registration is available online at the KTLC07 Web site (www.kentuckytlc.org) or by downloading a registration form from the Web site to fax or mail.

Free workshops

New this year, conference registration includes three-hour workshops at no extra charge. In past years, workshops costs \$50 each in addition to the conference registration fee.

While there is no charge for the 2007 workshops, conference attendees still must register for the workshops of their selec-

tion. All workshops are offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Workshop and session listings are available on the conference Web site.

Hotel reservations

The Louisville Convention and Visitors Bureau is handling overnight lodging arrangements for persons attending KTLC07. Any reservation that will be direct

See YOU on Page 9

What's Inside

Bulletin Board	2
High-quality school leaders are a must for Kentucky	3
Students represented on school boards	4
Mathematics Center helps teachers hone instructional skills	5
Read and Discuss: How Full Is Your Bucket?	6
Breitholle is Kentucky's Star of Teaching	7
Grant helps districts intervene with older, struggling readers	8
News for education leaders	11
Team teaching and setting goals get students excited about learning	12



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Bulletin Board



Photo by Tim Thornberry

Area Technology Center (Casey County)

Bulletin Board is compiled by Rebecca Blessing
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Conferences

Adolescent Literacy Summit

The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development and Morehead State University are hosting an Adolescent Literacy Summit on Jan. 24. The summit will highlight the benefits of literacy coaching for struggling readers (grades 4-12) and provide more information about the Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project, a rigorous two-year program to train teachers to become literacy coaches.

Registration is limited to two teachers and one administrator per school. Deadline: Jan. 18. For more information or a registration form, contact: Martha.Hill@uky.edu.

School boards

The Kentucky School Boards Association's 71st annual conference is Feb. 23-25 at the Galt House East in Louisville.

www.ksba.org

Middle schools

The National Middle School Association's Middle Level Essentials Conference is Feb. 5-6 in St. Louis, Mo. The conference provides an in-depth look into topics key to the success of middle-level schools. This year's topics include professional learning communities, literacy across the content areas and closing the achievement gap.

www.nmsa.org - Click on "Professional Development," then "Conferences/Workshops," then "Middle Level Essentials."

Science teachers

The Kentucky Science Teachers Association's Mid-Winter Breakthrough will be held in Hopkinsville Feb. 16-17. Registration forms are due Feb. 2.

www.ksta.org/articles.asp?aID=111

Teaching and Learning Conference

The 2007 Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference will be held in Louisville at the Kentucky International Convention Center March 7-9. The theme for this year's conference is "Rigor, Relevance and Relationships: Three R's of a 21st Century Education."

www.kentuckytlc.org

Events

No Name-Calling Week

No Name-Calling Week is Jan. 22-26. Lesson plans and other resources are available online to help schools plan activities aimed at ending name-calling and bullying among students.

www.nonamecallingweek.org

Shakespeare competition

The 16th Annual Shakespeare Competition is scheduled for March 4 in Louisville. The competition is open to students in grades 7-12 and is sponsored by the English-Speaking Union, Kentucky Branch. School participation forms are due by Feb. 1.

www.esuky.org - Click on "Shakespeare Competition."

Student Achievement Grants

Feb. 1 is the deadline for applying for a National Education Association Foundation Student Achievement Grant. The initiative provides up to \$5,000 to improve the academic achievement of students by engaging them in critical-thinking and problem-solving activities that deepen knowledge of standards-based subject matter.

www.neafoundation.org/programs/StudentAchievement_Guidelines.htm

Lincoln oratory contest

Kentucky high school students are invited to compete in a statewide oratory contest in February. The event challenges students to develop, organize and communicate ideas related to the life and time of Abraham Lincoln. Applications, guidelines and resource materials are available on the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site Web site.

www.nps.gov/abli - Click on the link "For Teachers."

Science Teaching Excellence award

The Amgen Award for Science Teaching Excellence is designed to recognize and honor extraordinary K-12 science teachers who significantly impact their students through exemplary science teaching and who achieve demonstrated results in student learning in Kentucky communities and other locations where Amgen operates. Nomination deadline: Jan. 31.

www.amgen.com/citizenship/aaste.html

Cleanup logo contest

Kentucky K-12 students are encouraged to submit ideas for a new logo for Commonwealth Cleanup Week. The 2007 celebration and cleanup activities will take place March 25-31. Entries must be submitted to a county extension office by Feb. 9.

www.waste.ky.gov/ccw

Theatre performance

The Lexington Children's Theatre presents "The Garden of Rikki Tikki Tavi," a play based on the story by Rudyard Kipling. School performances are scheduled Jan. 23-26 at 10 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. Recommended for ages 9 and up.

Contact: Box office, (859) 254-4546, Ext. 247

www.lctonstage.org

Resources

eLearning for Educators

Registration closes Jan. 11 for the spring session of eLearning Kentucky, online professional development for educators. These interactive courses are free and provide opportunities to learn and share best practices and resources. Participants may qualify for up to 24 hours of Effective Instructional Leadership Act or professional development credit. Register online only.

www.education.ky.gov - Click on "KDE QuickLinks" and scroll down to "eLearning."

Kentucky Reading Project alumni

The Kentucky Reading Project is updating its alumni mailing list. KRP alumni are asked to e-mail their names, participation years, preferred e-mail addresses and preferred phone numbers to Doris Young at dlyoun2@uky.edu.

Summer Aviation Camps coordinator sought for 2007

The Aviation Museum of Kentucky is looking for an Aviation Camps Coordinator for summer 2007. Camps will be held in Lexington during June and at other Kentucky airport sites during July. Organizational skills, experience with students ages 10-16, reasonable proficiency in Microsoft Word and Excel (or similar programs) and aviation interest or experience are preferred.

Job requires part-time work February-May to recruit and train staff, plan and schedule programs, and market camps. Some travel involved.

Send cover letter and resume by Jan. 30 to sheila@aviationky.org.

Commissioner's Comments

High-quality school leaders are a must for Kentucky

By Linda France

Deputy Commissioner of Education

This past summer, I was involved in the most intense and challenging professional learning experience of my career. It didn't move me out of my "comfort zone" — it pushed me!

Last July, I was fortunate to be a part of the state team that attended a five-day Executive Leadership Program for Educators (ExEL) at Harvard University funded by the Wallace Foundation. That experience not only challenged my thinking about teaching and learning, it also helped me to critically analyze my own knowledge and skills.

The experience marked the beginning of a learning journey for me and other Kentucky educators that will span a course of the next three years and a renewed commitment to support high-quality teaching and learning across the state. As Richard Elmore, professor of education at Harvard, charged us to remember throughout our work in this project, "It is the teachers and their instructional practices, not curriculum programs or a change in school structure, that improves student learning."

Harvard leaders have defined the heart of ExEL work over the next three years around these organizing principles:

- The focus of all the work is on improving teaching and learning and supporting the instructional core.
- The work is systemic — involving states, districts, schools and classrooms (as well as outside stakeholders) with a focus throughout on alignment and coherence, and how each level adds value to improving teaching and learning.
- Improving teaching and learning means that at all levels we need to know and establish consensus on what good teaching is, organize for it, lead it and assess it.

Kentucky's participants include four teams consisting of both district and school representatives from Boone, Daviess, Jefferson and Kenton counties along with a state team that includes Kentucky legislators Rep. Frank Rasche and Sen. Kenneth Winters.

During our time at Harvard, each team worked from dawn until late into the night. We talked school improvement at breakfast; we pored over homework every night. We watched videos of classroom instruction and analyzed what worked and what did not.

We discussed ways to improve leadership skills and teaching practices. We read and discussed case studies of businesses that are doing extraordinary things to move their companies forward. We drew parallels between successful business practices and successful educational practices.

What kept me going during this intense

training was not only the energy that comes from learning and being back in the classroom again, but also the dynamic interactions of the other 35 Kentucky state and district education leaders who were learning with me. Each of us is intent on strengthening our abilities to lead education improvement at the state, district and school levels.

We took time to reflect on our own practices and learning needs, as well as our own inadequacies. We raised important questions about the roles and responsibilities of state, district and school teams and explored ways in which we can better work together to build a coherent system with a crystal-clear focus on the instructional core.

At the summer program, we agreed on some broad, overall goals and activities for the upcoming year, including:

- Focusing and leading a conversation at the state, district and school levels about what constitutes good teaching and what are the desired learning outcomes for students. As this effort moves forward, teams will assess how well we are organized to lead and support good instruction as we evaluate current policies, practices and processes against those needed to support the desired changes.
- Clarifying both the state and district roles in determining what constitutes good teaching, balancing the need for statewide uniformity with respect for local autonomy.

Each team selected a specific strategy for its initial focus. Kenton County educators are focusing on achieving coherent instructional practices in every classroom through teacher leadership networks. The Jefferson County team is focused on improving the performance of students in mathematics and science through an aligned and coherent districtwide instructional program.

In Boone County, the team is focused on empowering school leadership to concentrate on issues of teaching and learning and leading instructional improvement. The Daviess County team is focused on creating urgency among district principals for supporting and improving the instruc-

tional core and getting all elements of the organization aligned for this work.

Our state-level team's focus is on creating the conditions for developing and implementing cohesive principal and teacher leadership systems that build on previous work initiated through the State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP) and other leadership work.

All of the ExEL teams got together Nov. 8-9 in Louisville for the Fall In-State Institute. Several teams have expanded their memberships after looking at the most effective means of carrying out their local plans.

At this most recent meeting, we discussed lessons learned thus far, roadblocks encountered and removed, and new and effective strategies that had been discovered. We reviewed planned activities, made mid-course corrections and explored plans for the Spring In-State Institute, during which we will look at our accomplishments and make plans for the upcoming year.

The theories about leadership and change that we are learning and the impact that

groundbreaking work on leadership for instructional improvement.

While we are limited to the number of district teams that can directly participate, we will be expanding our participation for year two of the project to get as many Kentucky districts as possible involved. We anticipate being able to accommodate possibly as many as five additional teams for year two. Superintendents who might be interested in forming a team may contact me at (502) 564-5130 to find out more about the district selection process.

I want to clarify, however, that ExEL work is not only about a district leadership team process involving a select few teams. It also is about an ongoing, statewide conversation around defining and establishing consensus on what is good teaching, how we assess good teaching, what are the conditions that are necessary to achieve good teaching, what are the organizational structures and leadership processes that best support good teaching, and what are the respective roles of the state, schools and districts working together to make those determinations.



France



Conner Middle School Principal Linda Viox, standing, meets with teachers Margaret S. Raupach, Ken Spitzer and Julie Hansel to develop a new program titled Pyramid Intervention. Viox learned about the program to identify students at risk and provide assistance so there are no failures while she participated in this summer's Executive Leadership Training Program for Educators at Harvard.

we hope to achieve in the classroom as a result of our involvement in the ExEL project are so exciting, I wish every Kentucky educator could have a chance to directly participate. I want everyone to be exposed to the energy, enthusiasm and commitment of both the Harvard faculty and your own colleagues across the state!

Kentucky is one of only four states chosen to participate in the ExEL project and one of only two states working with Harvard. (Two other states are working with another university.) We are truly involved in some

We plan to disseminate some of the lessons learned and products produced from our activities through publication in *Kentucky Teacher*, through the Commissioner's Advisory Networks, at the Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference in March 2007 and at other statewide education meetings. And, we will continue to provide more information about this initiative to you on this page in the future.

(To comment on this topic, contact Deputy Commissioner France at linda.france@education.ky.gov.)

School boards are including student representation

By Rebecca Blessing

rebecca.blessing@education.ky.gov

If the newest member of the Shelby County Board of Education looks a little younger than the rest of the board members, that's because he is. Students at Shelby County High School elected junior Edgar Melo to a seat on the local school board in October.

The Shelby County School Board approved a policy last summer to include a non-voting student member from the high school. The board wanted to include student input in its decision-making process.

"Every decision that is made by the board focuses on students, so it will be an added bonus to actually have a student present for the discussions that take place," said Superintendent Elaine Farris.

Shelby County is one of a growing number of districts in the state to include a student on the school board. In 2001, Boone County was the first district in Kentucky to add a student as a non-voting school board member. Board

members there decided to create a seat for a student representative to help students better understand how school districts operate and to give board members an opportunity to hear the student voice at their meetings.

In each district, students compete for the coveted position. In Shelby County, students and teachers may nominate either juniors or seniors for the seat. To be considered, a student must meet the following criteria:

- 2.5 grade point average or higher
- fewer than two days unexcused absence or tardy
- no violations of board or school code book regulations
- participation in school activities
- demonstrated leadership

A screening committee reviews the qualified candidates and narrows the nominations to five finalists who then campaign for the office.

At the campaign rally, Edgar Melo told the junior class at Shelby

County High School that he would speak for all students, not just Latinos, and that he would consider it a privilege to represent their views to the board during its decision-making process.

Shelby County Clerk Sue Carole Perry configured a voting machine with the five candidates' names for the election. Students cast their ballots in a real voting booth.

Melo emerged the winner. "I knew it was a big deal. Never thought I would be nominated, let alone win," he said.

Shelby County High School Spanish teacher Elizabeth Mandeel nominated Edgar for the position because she said, "I believe in him. Edgar values education, and I trust him to make decisions that would benefit education."

The honor roll student moved to Shelbyville from Puerto Rico in 2001 knowing very little English. "Edgar tries his absolute best, all



District Judge Linda Armstrong administers the oath of office to Shelby County High School student Edgar Melo prior to his first meeting as student representative on the Shelby County Board of Education.

Photo by Rick McComb

the time. I guess what I admire is his attitude and his willingness to do what is right, even if it is hard," said Mandeel.

As a school board member, Melo wants to "figure out what we can do to improve test scores in general from CATS to Scantron to ACT for juniors and seniors."

Superintendent Farris said, "The student voice is important to me. This is another avenue where

school administrators and the school board can continue to focus on what's best for our students. We look forward to working with Edgar and hearing what he can bring to the table. I am sure he will represent the students of Shelby County Public Schools well."

(Information for this article was provided by Duanne Puckett, community relations coordinator for Shelby County Public Schools.)

Carroll County special education students serve up mathematics skills for lunch

By Jeff Fremin

Carroll County Schools

Luncheon guests of Nancy Hilton's special education students recently received healthy servings of linear equations with their sliced ham and generous portions of Pythagorean Theorem with their cherry pie. Ten Carroll County High School students with functional mental disabilities prepared and served a meal for board of education members, district administrators and central office workers, and other invited guests.

The food was tasty, guests agreed. However, the real meat at the showcase luncheon was the students' display of three of the five mathematics standards special education students participating in the alternate assessment are now required to achieve.

"You don't know what kids can accomplish until you push them," said Hilton, who teaches her students practical living skills. Her classroom is complete with a stove, refrigerator and cabinets, as well as a new interactive whiteboard. Similar Smart Boards are being installed in all classrooms in Carroll County schools.

Hilton said she was prompted to include the mathematics activities in the luncheon after the

recent unveiling of the new mathematics standards for special education students at an Ohio Valley Educational Consortium meeting. During the meeting, many col-

leagues expressed reservations about whether special education students with the most severe cognitive disabilities can meet the demanding challenges of higher-order mathematics, she said.



Photo by Jeff Fremin, Carroll County Schools

Nancy Hilton holds a calculator while senior Amanda Hearn works on a reading problem displayed on the classroom Smart Board. The problem involves computing a discount and calculating sales tax for a purchase.

"Many people say special edu-

cation students can't meet these standards," said Hilton. "We're going to prove them wrong." Her students are doing just that — with enthusiasm.

and adding 6 percent in sales tax. "You can do it."

The luncheon guests applauded after Hearn read the problem, punched in numbers on a calculator and solved the problem with the correct answer on the board. Other students received similar encouragement as they graphed linear equations and determined the length of the hypotenuse of a right triangle by using the Pythagorean Theorem.

A few students enjoyed the mathematics challenge so much they went back for seconds.

"We want to do one, too," said Blackburn after Thomas Granger, a junior, finished demonstrating the Pythagorean Theorem.

Hilton said that her students were hungry for something different to learn in the classroom. "Jerry really perked up when we started working on the Pythagorean Theorem," said Hilton. "He was bored with adding and subtracting money and doing only practical living skills. Those are important skills, but he's been doing that since elementary school. The new standards give the students more of a challenge."

Hilton said that reaching higher standards did not come without its challenges. As one

of the new state requirements for the alternate portfolio, said Hilton, teachers must show, by using a pre-test and post-test, that students have progressed in their knowledge and application of certain core content standards.

"For some of the students, it (doing the mathematics problems) was like looking at a foreign language," said Hilton. "But we took them where they were and started from there."

None of Hilton's students could answer any of the problems on the pre-test, but eight out of 10 scored 100 percent on the post-test. Nine of Hilton's other students correctly demonstrated at least one of the three mathematics concepts in front of the luncheon guests.

"I was very impressed," said board of education member Mona Kindoll. "Our special education teachers are raising expectations and helping students reach their potential."

(Jeff Fremin is the public information officer for Carroll County Schools. Contact him at (502) 732-7080, jeff.fremin@carroll.kyschools.us.)

MORE INFO ...

Nancy Hilton, (502) 732-7075, nancy.hilton@carroll.kyschools.us

Mathematics Center helps teachers hone instructional skills to increase learning

Kentucky public school mathematics teachers who are looking for opportunities to make stronger connections between instruction and mathematics content need look no further than programs offered through the Kentucky Center for Mathematics. The center has launched two statewide initiatives to place mathematics coaches and intervention teachers in schools to help support mathematics instruction.

This past summer, 67 teachers trained to work in Kentucky schools as mathematics coaches. These coaches are helping their peers enhance content skills and increase instructional strategies as well as build a collaborative environment among mathematics teachers in their buildings. These specially trained coaches work side-by-side with teachers to help plan, observe and reflect on classroom lessons and topics of study.

Becoming a coach

If you love teaching mathematics and are interested in communicating your knowledge and enthusiasm to other teachers in your school, you may want to consider being part of the 2007-08 mathematics coach cadre. Applications were available online in early December at the Kentucky Center for Mathematics Web site (www.kentuckymathematics.org). The application deadline will be due mid-March. All successful applicants will be notified by early April.

The application for a mathematics coach requires both the applying teacher and his or her

school administrator to prepare a plan for implementing mathematics coaching in the school. Together they must describe how the coach's efforts will support the school's instructional goals in mathematics. They also must tell how the school will:

- provide the space, resources, time and support necessary for the coach to function effectively
- provide one-half day of release time during regular school hours for the applicant to coach mathematics instruction in the building
- allow the applicant and an administrator to attend all training outlined in the application (14 days for the coach, two days for the administrator)

Successful teacher applicants will receive eight days of training during one of two sessions to be held next June and July. There will be three two-day follow-up training sessions during the 2007-08 school year. Coaches also are encouraged to lead and attend sessions at the Kentucky Council of Teachers of Mathematics conference and the Kentucky Teaching and Learning Conference.

Funding intervention teachers

Mathematics Achievement Grants were available this school year and next school year to help schools implement a mathematics diagnostic assessment and intervention program

in primary grades. The two-year grant program provides schools with \$70,000 in the first year and up to \$60,000 for the second year. The application deadline just ended for the 2007-08 grants.

Schools can use money from the grant to fund a mathematics intervention teacher. This person is trained to use research-based intervention strategies with primary students who are struggling in mathematics. Intervention teachers work at least one half of every day with struggling students.

There are 46 intervention teachers working with Kentucky primary students this school year. These teachers are using Number Worlds or Math Recovery programs as frameworks for intervention services in their schools.

Schools that do not receive Mathematics Achievement Grant funds can contact Alice Gabbard at the Kentucky Center for Mathematics to find out more about mathematics intervention training programs.

MORE INFO ...

www.kentuckymathematics.org

Gary Palmer, director of Coaching Programs at the Kentucky Center for Mathematics, (859) 572-7693, palmerg@nku.edu

Alice Gabbard, director of Diagnostic Intervention Programs at the Kentucky Center for Mathematics, (859) 572-7691, gabbardal@nku.edu

Ava Taylor, Math and Science Branch manager for the Kentucky Department of Education, (502) 564-2106, ava.taylor@education.ky.gov

Upgrade to school e-mail system completed

By Lisa Y. Gross

lisa.gross@education.ky.gov

Work on a statewide, centrally managed technology infrastructure that brings a new standardized e-mail system for all K-12 public schools in Kentucky has been completed. The new system, which will increase collaborative opportunities within the learning environment, is one of the largest such deployments ever rolled out in the United States.

E-mail systems for public schools across Kentucky are now maintained by the Kentucky Department of Education. The new infrastructure reduces costs to individual districts by standardizing hardware and software configurations and eliminating the need for districts to manage upkeep. It also will allow school districts across the state to more easily collaborate, offer new educational services and curriculum, and connect teachers, learners

and administrators from districts of all size.

"Ultimately it is about improving the educational opportunities," said Chuck Austin, manager of the Engineering and Architecture Services Group for the department's Office of Education Technology. "In an education organization, it is important that everyone be able to communicate easily, seamlessly and with the same kind of user experience whether they're using a work station, a laptop or a mobile device. In addition to increasing opportunities for learning and collaboration across and among all school districts in the state, the new communications system is expected to bring significant cost savings, too."

In a two-phase process, the department deployed Microsoft Windows Server 2003, Microsoft Active Directory and Microsoft Exchange 2003 and distributed 200 Exchange servers throughout every school district in the state.

The department then centralized systems management and administration to alleviate the burden on local school district personnel, while still allowing school districts to manage local user access.

The simpler system's management tools relieve local school district personnel of the burden of hardware and software configuration, servicing, patching, monitoring, security and disaster recovery and licensing concerns, while providing school districts with control over end user usage as appropriate.

The overhauled communications system has also helped the Department of Education address regulatory and organizational challenges, such as meeting federally mandated guidelines for protecting the privacy and security of children.

The new e-mail system serves staff and students in 1,200 public schools within 175 Kentucky school districts.



Photo by Rebecca Blessing

Colorful chemistry

Eighth-grade science teacher Leslee Wainscott, Conner Middle School (Boone Co.), conducts an experiment on the surface tension of milk during a session on teaching chemistry with common materials offered at the Kentucky Science Teachers Association 2006 conference in Lexington.

Department gets new logo; offers phone number reminder

The Kentucky Department of Education has a new logo and slogan. The stylized artwork features two figures reaching for a star with the outline of Kentucky in the background. The Kentucky Board of Education selected the slogan, "Every Child Proficient and Prepared for Success," to more closely represent the board's and the department's mission.

The logo will be used on department printed materials. John Boone, a graphic artist in the department's Division of Communications, designed the logo.

The department's toll-free information line — (800) KDE-KERA — has been discontinued. If you used this number to get information about department programs and services or to reach department employees, you should call a direct line instead.

To find department phone listings by program, agency function or a staff member's last name, use the "Contact Us" feature at the bottom of each page on the department's Web site or go directly to www.education.ky.gov/KDE/homepagerepository/footer/contact+us.htm.

In addition, the department routinely gets calls about teachers' retirement and certification programs, which are not administered by the Kentucky Department of Education.

If you have questions about retirement, call Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System at (502) 848-8500 or toll free at (800) 618-1687.

To get answers to certification questions, contact the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board at (502) 564-4606 or toll free at (888) 598-7667.

Both agencies have Web sites with e-mail contacts and program information.

MORE INFO ...

Kentucky Department of Education — www.education.ky.gov/KDE/homepagerepository/footer/contact+us.htm

Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System — (502) 848-8500, (800) 618-1687, www.ktrs.ky.gov

Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board — (502) 564-4606, (888) 598-7667, www.kyepsb.net



How Full Is Your Bucket?

Reviewed by Brenda Grinstead Roberts
Barren County Schools

"I think bucket dripping is a great program because it makes everybody feel ten times better all the time!" says Alex Fahrenholz, a 6th-grade student at Eastern Elementary School (Barren County).

"It is nice to do something for someone," adds classmate Willie England.

How Full Is Your Bucket?, written by Tom Rath and Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D., is a small book that is having a big impact on our staff and students at Eastern Elementary. The *New York Times* No. 1 bestseller contains positive strategies, easily implemented in a home, a classroom or any workplace.

This school year, Principal Will Compton gave every teacher at our school a copy of the book. We read and discussed it. Then, we planned ways to practice what we'd read about being positive.

Every teacher knows that positive, specific praise motivates students. The authors say the magic ratio is five positive interactions for every negative interaction. They note that recognition must be specific, individualized and deserved. They also show us how to take small steps, which can change our classes and the world.

The book's concept is fundamental. *How Full Is Your Bucket?* provides a metaphor for every moment in your life — about 20,000 individual moments each day, according to Daniel Kahneman, a Nobel Prize-winning scientist who is quoted in the book.

Rath and Clifton explain the theory of the bucket and the dipper. "Each of us has an invisible bucket. It is constantly emptied or filled, depending on what others say or do to us. When our bucket is full, we feel great. When it's empty, we feel awful."

Daily interactions with family, friends, coworkers, teachers and peers can fill our buckets and make us feel more positive, or these same people can dip from our buckets and ruin the day, say the authors.

An easy read at 127 pages, the book represents more than 50 years of research. Clifton, considered the "Grandfather of Positive Psychology," began focusing on what is right after reviewing a case study early in his career about how the North Koreans treated United States' prisoners of war. Despite little physical torture, the American death rate in North Korean POW camps was 38 percent, the highest POW death rate in U.S. military history because of relentless negativity from the captors, according to the authors.

Rath and Clifton quote a 1925 study by Elizabeth Hurlock that showed students who received praise experienced major academic improvement. Students who were criticized or ignored showed a major

decline in test scores.

Using the metaphor of filling other's buckets, the authors explain five strategies for increasing positive emotions. They make it easy to put the strategies into practice in a classroom setting or any relationship. The five strategies are:

- prevent bucket dipping
- shine a light on what is right
- make best friends
- give unexpectedly
- reverse the Golden Rule

We have implemented these strategies at Eastern Elementary School by designing a bulletin board filled with paper buckets for every employee at the school. Paper water drops spill out of each bucket showing positive statements others have made about each person.

We also are using the strategies in our 6th-grade classrooms. One teacher has a huge paper bucket on the wall with water drops scattered across it. Other teachers use individual card pockets as buckets for each student in their classes.

Students can pick up blank water drops from a basket whenever they want to write a positive message to a classmate. The students who write the notes are just as excited

a drip in his or her bucket. Just remember, never dip out of someone's bucket," student Kayla Wooten reminded.

The bulletin boards are visual reminders for all of us — adults and students — to focus on what is right, and more importantly, to fill the buckets of others. Filling buckets takes little time since students have space on each paper water drop to write only a couple of sentences. However, the written notes are particularly rewarding because students can read them repeatedly.

Sixth-grader Evan Payne points out the importance of writing specific praise. "When people are trying to write to everyone at once, they don't really write anything to you in particular. I will use mine as an example. I know this is one of those kinds because it simply says, 'You are nice.' That doesn't mean anything to me."

While I cannot say test scores will rise this year as a result of this program, I can say almost every student has told me how much he or she likes the activity. Many students have told me how much better they feel about themselves, something very important as they prepare for middle school and high school.

"I think it is good because it helps people



Eastern Elementary's Family Resource Center Coordinator Tammy Jolly, left, and art teacher Karen Cantine add "drops" of compliments to buckets on the employee bulletin board that was designed by Cantine. Faculty and students at the school are writing positive statements about one another on paper droplets of water to encourage higher levels of teaching and learning this school year.

as the students who receive the notes.

"I think bucket dripping is very fun. I like getting drops. They make me feel happy. When a friend writes one to me, I write one back. I'm glad we do this," said Leah Thompson, a 6th-grade student.

"I think the bucket dripping idea is great. When I'm down and not having a good day ... I can look in my bucket and feel good about myself," said student Miranda McKinney.

"Bucket dripping is a very good idea. You can really make someone's day if you put

build up their confidence," said Kelsey Woodson, a 6th-grader.

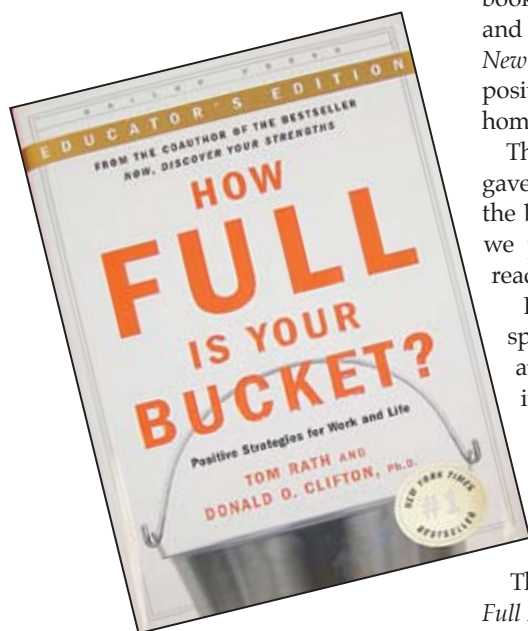
Classmate Mickayla Melton says she has had positive results sharing with her family the concept of filling the buckets of others. She talked to her younger brother about his school day. Later, he brought her a note that read, "Every time my heart falls down, you bring it back up."

(Brenda G. Roberts teaches 6th grade at Eastern Elementary School in Barren County. Contact her by e-mail at brenda.roberts@barren.kyschools.us.)

Like to recommend a new resource?

Have you read a book or professional article, used new software or visited a Web site you'd like to recommend to other educators? If so, you can reach nearly 54,000 teachers, administrators and education stakeholders by submitting a review of the resource to *Kentucky Teacher* for publication.

To receive information on writing for our publication — content, article length and deadlines — contact us by e-mail at kyteacher@education.ky.gov or by postal mail at *Kentucky Teacher*, Kentucky Department of Education, 612 Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort, KY 40601.



How Full Is Your Bucket?

Positive Strategies for Work and Life

Tom Rath and Donald O. Clifton, Ph.D.
Hardback; 127 pages; Gallup Press; 2004;
ISBN 1595620036

MORE INFO ...

The Educator's Edition of *How Full Is Your Bucket?* contains an additional 60 pages of handouts and ideas for implementing the program in schools and classrooms. For example, two activities ensure every student gets drops in his or her bucket.

Breitholle recognized as Kentucky's Star of Teaching

By Joy Barr

joy.barr@education.ky.gov

High expectations, positive encouragement and opportunities to share their learning are just a few of the ways Sheree Breitholle makes her students at Hillard Collins Elementary feel special. Her constant encouragement and positive attitude toward her chosen profession make the upper primary students at this Boone County school excited about learning.

This school year, the 30-year teaching veteran is getting her turn at feeling special. Breitholle has been named Kentucky's 2006 American Star of Teaching, a national award that honors teachers who use innovative strategies and raise student academic achievement.

Raising student achievement is the watchword at Hillard Collins Elementary. Throughout the hallways and classrooms, students are reminded of the school's mission: to provide every child the opportunity to experience academic, social and emotional success in a positive environment of open communication and high expectations.

Breitholle demonstrates those high expectations daily in her primary classroom and takes seriously her responsibility to help the school succeed in moving every child to proficiency and preparing each boy and girl for success.

To honor this commitment to education, Hillard Collins Principal Carol Elliott nominated Breitholle for the American Star of Teaching award. Parents, co-workers, students and community members also supported the nomination of this teacher who has spent her career in Boone



Students raise their hands to answer a question posed by Kentucky's Star of Teaching award winner, Sheree Breitholle, in her classroom at Hillard Collins Elementary (Boone County).

County schools.

In addition to classroom activities at Hillard Collins, Breitholle participates in community service programs that provide snacks and recreation to needy children throughout the community during the summer. She also makes professional development presentations and mentors new teachers.

"She is all about meeting every child's needs – leading them to

success. She teaches the whole child – not just academically, but socially and emotionally, also," said Elliott. One year, Breitholle knitted a winter hat for every student in her classroom, Elliott added.

Breitholle's classroom in this Title I school of more than 550 students is very colorful. On the walls are many posters that help students with their learning. Examples of student work spill from her classroom walls into the hallways. Her students work at tables in small groups rather than individual desks.

She selects a "student teacher" or helper of the day. Every student gets to be her teaching assistant and to share their own learning with their peers.

"It just makes the children feel special. I want each child to know that he or she is cared for when they come to school. When students feel cared for, only then can they learn," said Breitholle. The school has made great strides and has a 2006 accountability index of 76.6 on the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS).

Breitholle also takes the time each Wednesday to write a personalized note to each of her students,

pointing out progress the child has made that week. She refers to her students as "Dear Ones" or "Smart Ones."

Her methods are working, according to her students. "When we are good, she tells us that her heart fills up with joy," remarked one of Breitholle's students.

"The best part about Mrs. Breitholle is that she says the kindest words. She makes learning fun," added another student. Further evidence of her impact on students are her former students who come back to visit because of the impression she made on their lives.

Breitholle said she started teaching with a focused and heartfelt goal: for children to develop a passion for learning. A very humble person, Breitholle said she was inspired to teach while she was in the 2nd grade. She knew then that she wanted to be a teacher and can't think of anything else that she would rather do.

"I wanted to be just like Mrs. Garrison, my teacher and mentor," said Breitholle. "I have spent much of my life in the classroom."

MORE INFO ...

Sheree Breitholle, (859) 282-2350, sheree.breitholle@boone.kyschools.us

2007 American Stars of Teaching nominations

The U.S. Department of Education honors outstanding teachers in every state through its American Stars of Teaching program. Begun in 2004, the program seeks to recognize innovative teachers who are improving student achievement. The annual recognition is part of the federal agency's Teacher-to-Teacher initiative.

One teacher from every state and the District of Columbia — representing all grade levels and disciplines — is selected for the honor each year as a No Child Left Behind 2006 American Star of Teaching. The recognition program includes teacher workshops, teacher and principal roundtables, regular e-mail updates and free online professional development.

Nomination forms for the 2007 American Star of Teaching will be available online at www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/america-stars-factsheet.html in January 2007.



Sheree Breitholle addresses her upper primary students at Hillard Collins Elementary (Boone County) as "Dear Ones" and "Smart Ones" in weekly progress letters and written classroom directions.

Grant helps districts to intervene with older, struggling readers

By Cathy Lindsey

cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

Reading is the gateway skill to academic success. Studies have shown that a student who cannot read or who is reading below expected levels will not be successful in core content classes at any level.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Education says that older students who struggle with reading are more likely to drop out of school. A recent study by ACT, whose assessments measure student preparedness for college, reports that half of high school graduates are not prepared for college-level reading.

So, when public school students fall behind in reading, it is important for schools to intervene and offer support not just for elementary students, but at every level.

This fall, middle and high school students in seven Kentucky school districts are getting assistance to improve their literacy skills across the curriculum. A federal Striving Readers grant focuses these districts' work on struggling secondary-level readers. However, the five-year grant program also will help all students in participating schools become better readers in every content area.

"In order to meet this goal, all teachers will bind together to use reading strategies while teaching their content areas such as English, social studies, mathematics and science," said Vicky Ramey, a literacy coach at Bate Middle School (Danville Independent).

dent). "The emphasis on reading instruction and student comprehension will give students the help they need to master reading skills and accelerate learning in all content areas."

Kentucky received one of only eight Striving Readers grants awarded nationwide. Of the eight, it is the only grant focused on rural schools. It is enabling the Kentucky Content Literacy Consortium (KCLC) to target more than 1,000 struggling readers at 23 public middle and high schools across the state.

Participating districts are Danville Independent, Eminence Independent and Bullitt, Jessamine, Pike, Rowan and Washington counties. Each participating school is implementing two complementary literacy initiatives:

- a previously tested schoolwide initiative to boost literacy in all subject areas for all students
- a research-based intervention for struggling 6th- and 9th-grade readers – At the end of the grant, data from the intervention program will be available to schools throughout the country to help guide secondary reading instruction and intervention.

Kentucky's nearly \$17 million, five-year grant provides literacy coaches in each school. The coaches work half time directly with students who are reading below expected levels. The other half of the coaches' time is spent collaborating with

classroom teachers, providing ongoing support, coaching and modeling the implementation of literacy strategies.

Schoolwide focus

Each school is using the Collaborative Model for Literacy to provide effective literacy strategies across all content areas. The model takes a schoolwide approach to teaching literacy, based on the developmental needs of adolescents.

The model was developed and is supported by the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning (CTL), a nonprofit educational consulting firm and a partner in the grant.

"The collaborative nature of the model emphasizes work among teachers across disciplines who work with common groups of students," said Amy Awbrey, CTL coordinator of program design and research. "This ensures teachers will use common methods over time, so they can build new habits of literature learning behaviors with students who would otherwise struggle to apply these skills as they learn."

Last summer, approximately 950 teachers, all certified staff in each participating school, attended a summer institute led by CTL staff. Teachers learned effective literacy strategies taught around six areas: reading comprehension, vocabulary development, writing to learn, writing to use what you know, verbal fluency and academic dialogue.

"It is exciting when all teachers in a school are aware of literacy strategies and are willing to help students use the strategies while studying within their content areas," said Kathy Belcher, project director for the grant in Kentucky.

Teachers also completed a "Strategy Commitment Map" during the institute. Individually and as teams, they set goals and determined when and how they would implement the reading strategies this school year.

"Teachers are implementing the strategies and seeing positive results," said Paula Stafford, federal programs coordinator in Rowan County Schools. She said teachers in her district are excited about the total student participation and are, for the first time, seeing what their students can really do.

Intervention for struggling readers

Providing direct instruction as an intervention for struggling readers at the 6th- and 9th-grade levels is the second initiative. The literacy consortium has selected the Kansas Learning Strategies Intervention Model to identify students whose reading skills are two years or more behind their grade level.

Last August, students in grades 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12 took the GRADE (Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation) to determine their reading skills level. The Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) at the University of Kentucky randomly divided the students in grades 6 and 9 who scored two or more years below grade level reading into two groups.

Students in the experimental group are participating in a daily reading instruction class. Students in the control group

don't receive this intervention. All students participate in the schoolwide reading programs.

In spring 2007, students in grades 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12 again will take the GRADE as a post-test measure. Next fall, any 7th or 10th grader who is still scoring two or more years below grade level will be placed in an intervention class. Pre- and post-testing will be repeated each year of the grant.

Each literacy coach is working directly with the 6th- and 9th-grade intervention classes this year. They will add 7th- and 10th-grade struggling readers the following years. The coaches also will collect data through teacher units, plans, student work and walk-throughs.

"The beauty of the program is tying the middle school and high school together," said Leon Smith, Washington County High School principal. "Our coaches work very closely together. Hopefully, the program will be effective in the middle school, and, therefore, our numbers at grade 9 will be smaller."

Rowan County educators already are seeing results. "The intervention classes are having a profound impact on students," Stafford said. "We have seen remarkable student progress, and many students are already asking if they can be in the class again next year. The schoolwide focus and commitment by teachers have helped us renew our focus on literacy development."

State Project Director Belcher says the Striving Readers program will do more than just improve literacy. "Students are more interested in reading within their content area, applying strategies across the curriculum and using techniques with support from all their teachers during class time and outside of class."

Greg Schulz, director of Early Childhood Development for Danville Independent schools, said, "In Danville, we hope that we have demonstrated an effective method to help all students increase their literacy skills, especially those that entered middle school behind in their reading. We hope to provide research to prove the effectiveness of the schoolwide program and the intervention, which can be replicated in schools across the nation to help adolescent struggling readers."

The Striving Readers grant also receives support from the University of Louisville and UK. U of L provides ongoing professional development for teachers and Literacy Leadership certification for literacy coaches. The CCLD at UK is evaluating teaching methods and gathering annual information about implementation of the grant that includes teacher and student surveys, teacher interviews, classroom observations and student assessments.

MORE INFO ...

www.danville.k12.ky.us/district/programs/KCLCwebpage/index.htm – provides a list of Web sites with adolescent literacy strategies and an overview of the Kentucky Literacy Project, sponsored by the Kentucky Department of Education



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Vicky Ramey, literacy coach at Bate Middle School (Danville Independent), works with Akeem Ray to strengthen his reading comprehension skills. The Striving Reader grant provides literacy coaches to participating schools. They work directly with students and also collaborate with classroom teachers to provide ongoing supporting teaching literacy skills to all students across the curriculum.

National school crime study released

The National Center for Education Statistics, in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Statistics, has released its annual report examining school crime and safety, "Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2006." The report presents the most recent national data available on school crime and student safety, from the 2003-04 school year to 2005.

The report examines crimes that occur in schools such as bullying, alcohol use, marijuana use and safety measures in schools. It also includes information about crime occurring on the way to and from school.

The report provides the most current

detailed statistical information to inform the nation on the nature of crime in schools. It presents data on crime at school from the perspectives of students, teachers, principals and the general population. Information for the report was drawn from an array of national surveys of students, teachers and principals, as well as data from federal education, crime and health agencies.

Data on crime away from school also are presented to place school crime in the context of crime in the larger society.

The report is available on the Internet for download at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007003.pdf>.

MARKS-JOHNS from Page 1

reward to elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and other education professionals. The foundation was established in 1985. The first awards were given in 1987.

Kentucky has participated in the awards program since 1993. Since that time, 47 Kentucky educators have received the award. This year, nearly 100 educators from 48 states and the District of Columbia were selected as winners.

Award winners become members of the Milken Educator Network. The network is a voluntary association of nearly 2,000

Milken Educators and other exemplary educators and business leaders from across the country who are dedicated to improving teacher quality and utilizing research and expertise to shape education policy at state and local levels.

The Milken Family Foundation was established in 1982 to discover and advance inventive and effective ways of helping people help themselves and those around them lead productive and satisfying lives. The California-based foundation advances this mission primarily through its work in education and medical research.



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Finding new ways to learn

Michelle Robbins, a special education teacher at Berea Community Middle School and High School, watches sophomore Miata Fields, second from right, work with students Jessica Savatgy and Dalton Hall to increase their learning skills. Robbins oversees a unique peer-tutoring program in the Berea Independent School District that matches high school students with special education students. The program benefits both the regular education and special education students, she said.

YOU from Page 1

billed or reserved using a purchase order must be completed by calling the convention and visitors bureau directly.

A hotel reservation form can be downloaded from the conference Web site. Reservations must be made by Feb. 19, 2007, by using one of the following methods:

- online at www.kentuckytlc.org
- phone toll free (800) 743-3100 or (502) 561-3100
- fax (502) 561-3121
- mail the Greater Louisville CVB, Attn: Housing, One Riverfront Plaza, 401 W. Main St., Suite 2300, Louisville, KY 40202.

At the conference

Onsite registration begins Wednesday, March 7, between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the convention center and continues Thursday and Friday.

The conference begins on Wednesday at 6 p.m. with a reception in the Cascade Ballroom at the convention center. Well-known educator and motivational speaker John Wagner will open the conference with a message about the positive power of humor in times of change. Wagner was born and grew up in northern Kentucky. He has been a dean and administrator at a technical and community college for the past 18 years.

After Wagner's presentation, a drawing will be held for a cruise. The winner must

be older than 18 and present to win. Kentucky Department of Education staff, exhibitors and their families are not eligible to enter the drawing.

Other featured presenters at KTL07 include former Kentucky Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit; Tom Guskey, professor of educational policy studies and evaluation at the University of Kentucky; Susan Gunderman and Mimi Dyer from the International Center for Leadership in Education; Susan Hall, founder of the 95 Percent Group; and Fred Johnson, executive director of Educational Resource Services. These presenters are scheduled in large-capacity rooms to allow all conference attendees ample opportunity to hear a variety of information about state and national education issues. For more information on these featured presenters, visit the conference Web site.

Conference participants can check e-mail, get something to eat and network with fellow conference-goers in the CyberCafe while attending KTL07. The conference Exhibit Hall will give educators a chance to see and purchase the latest in educational products and a variety of classroom resources. Register to win door prizes while visiting the Exhibit Hall on Thursday and Friday.

MORE INFO . . .
www.kentuckytlc.org



Photo by Rick McComb

Students at Shacklette Elementary School (Jefferson County) rush to congratulate 4th-grade teacher LaMesa Marks-Johns after she was named a Milken Family Foundation National Educator.

Read *Kentucky Teacher* online

Access *Kentucky Teacher* issues from 1997-98 to 2006-07 online at www.education.ky.gov. Enter "Kentucky Teacher" in the keyword/search box in the upper right-hand corner and click.

STATE from Page 1

lation dealing with these changes Jan. 25 at 2 p.m. in Frankfort. Individuals interested in speaking Jan. 25 should notify the Kentucky Department of Education in writing five working days before the hearing. Written comments will also be accepted until Jan. 31. If no notification of intent to attend the hearing is received by that date, the hearing may be canceled.

More information on participating in the public hearing can be found on the department's Web site at www.education.ky.gov.

At its February meeting, the board can consider making changes to the regulation upon review of comments from the public hearing. Once the board has made a final decision on this regulation, it will proceed through the legislative review process.

In other business, the board agreed to contract with Ray and Associates Inc. of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to manage the search for a new commissioner of education. The

organization has specialized in school executive leadership searches since 1975 and is recognized as a top search firm in the country.

The board will meet with members of the firm Jan. 10 to discuss expectations and desired qualifications of the next Kentucky education commissioner. This conversation will be based, in part, on information compiled from statewide public input received through the department's Web site.

Each year, the state board endorses proposals it deems appropriate for consideration by the General Assembly. The board's 2007 legislative priorities are to:

- Clarify the language on principal selection to clearly indicate that the superintendent recommends candidates for the position and the school council selects from among those recommended. This would include expanding the criteria for low-performing schools so that either

the superintendent or the Highly Skilled Educator would select the principal.

- Provide grounds for appealing nonresident student agreements to the commissioner of education and the Kentucky Board of Education. The board also recommends a legislative study to consider all factors to make recommendations for legislative enactment.
- Suspend the prevailing wage requirement for school construction for three years to study the impact. The board

also recommends making changes to the prevailing wage to better represent the region's actual wages.

The board named Henry Vogt Heuser, Jr., CEO and president of UniStar/Vogt in Louisville, as the recipient of the seventh annual Joseph W. Kelly Award. (See story on Page 11.)

The next meeting of the state board will be Jan. 10 in Frankfort. The board's February meeting also will be in Frankfort Feb. 7 and 8.

MORE INFO ...

www.education.ky.gov - Click on "KDE QuickLinks" on the homepage. Scroll down to "State Board of Education" and click for state board information.

- Click on "Administrative Resources" in the menu across the top of the page and then select "Legal and Legislative Services" in the left-hand menu for public hearing information.



Ensuring safe passage

Crossing guard Evelyn Rice signals "stop" to oncoming traffic so that students attending Two Rivers Middle School (Covington Independent) can safely cross the street. Three members of the school's Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) investigated why the district no longer had crossing guards at its schools and ultimately helped Covington city government and the school district reach a compromise to restore crossing guards at all schools. In the insert, Cynthia Baker, school technology teacher and STLP sponsor, and students Shannon Sullivan, Jabriesha Crim and Dyese Riley are all smiles after learning that the girls' project received national recognition from the U.S. Army's ECYBERMISSION awards program. Each student received a \$6,500 savings bond for being a national finalist in the program.

Photos by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Immigrant students will have impact on public schools

A new report by the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools contains information on immigration trends and the mental health, language and cultural needs of immigrants and refugee children. It also highlights the role public schools can play in providing culturally competent care for immigrants.

Among the findings are:

- The settlement patterns of the foreign-born population have shifted to the west and south, up from 37.7 percent in 1970 to 65.5 percent in 2000. As a result, many "new destination communities" have no experience with immigrant populations. Most are not prepared for the influx of students who sometimes comprise as much as 50 percent of school enrollment.
- Immigrant children – particularly recent immigrants – are less likely to receive necessary mental health services than their nonimmigrant peers. A shortage of bilingual/bicultural mental health professionals, unfamiliarity with U.S. mental health services, lack of health insurance and the stigma associated with treatment may prevent immigrant families from seeking help. Schools must be prepared to offer these services in conjunction with local health care providers.
- The foreign-born population of the U.S. numbered 31.1 million in 2000, or 11.1 percent of the total U.S. population. This is an increase of 57 percent over 1990 levels. In 2000, one in five children under age 18 was estimated to have at least one foreign-born parent. One in four poor children had a foreign-born parent.

The largest number of immigrants come from Mexico (39 percent.) About 23 percent of the immigrants come from Asia and the Pacific Islands, 6 percent from Central America and the Caribbean, 11 percent from Europe, 5 percent from South America, 3 percent from Africa and another 2 percent from Canada, Bermuda and Cape Verde.

It is expected that racial/ethnic minorities, as a whole, will become the numerical majority in the U.S. within the next few decades. According to the report, the number of children in immigrant families is growing rapidly in every state across the country.

www.futureofchildren.org/pubs-info2825/pubs-info_show.htm?doc_id=240166

Listservs keep teachers informed and connected to instruction

Have you ever wondered what other Kentucky teachers in your content area are using to teach a certain content standard? Do you want to share really successful activities with other content teachers throughout the state? Are you looking for educators in other parts of the state with whom you can talk about instruction, depth of knowledge or professional development? Would you like a quick way to communicate with a lot of other coaches about open dates?

If you have a school e-mail address, the ability to do any of those things is just a click or two away. The University of Kentucky, in accordance with state technology regulations, maintains a Web site that offers access to nearly 150 listservs.

These content-specific, job-specific listservs allow educators, administrators and students to communicate with groups of educators, administrators and students who have similar interests in education topics. Depending on the listserv, you

could have access to around 50 to more than 1,000 people.

There are listservs for every content area and grade level. Many education professional associations have listservs in addition to their Web sites. There are listservs for administrators in a variety of management programs. Regional education cooperatives have listservs, as do coaches for a variety of sports.

Subscription to each listserv is free. You can subscribe to as many or as few listservs

as you want, and you can unsubscribe from a listserv at any time.

Kentucky Department of Education content consultants use the listservs as a first line of communication with educators and administrators about content topics and professional development opportunities throughout the state. Make sure you're "in the know" about your content or professional development programs by subscribing online at www.uky.edu/Education/kylists.html.

Leadership Letter

Compiled by Rebecca Blessing
rebecca.blessing@education.ky.gov

Henry Heuser receives Joseph Kelly Award

Henry Vogt Heuser Jr., CEO and president of UniStar/Vogt in Louisville, is the recipient of the seventh annual Joseph W. Kelly Award. The award was presented to Heuser by the Kentucky Board of Education at its regular December meeting in Frankfort.

Jefferson County School Superintendent Stephen Daeschner nominated Heuser for the honor. Heuser has served on the board of the Jefferson County Public Education Foundation, which advances education through support of the school district. He and his father worked to endow a perpetual scholarship fund in 1999 that provides \$10,000 scholarships to outstanding Jefferson County high school seniors each year. He also has raised more than \$1 million for the Every 1 Reads project in Jefferson County and serves as a volunteer mentor for the program.

"Henry Heuser is a role-model of selfless service to his community and has applied himself wholeheartedly to the goal of improving educational opportunities for all students of Jefferson County," Daeschner said in nominating Heuser for the award. "[He] is a businessman who talks the talk and then walks the walk for public education. I wish that there were a million like him."

The state board of education created the award to honor Joseph W. Kelly, a businessman and chair of the Kentucky Board of Education from 1991 to 1998. Kelly's efforts and expertise were crucial to the implementation and nurturing of Kentucky's school improvement efforts.

The award recognizes businesspeople who have offered outstanding leadership and service toward promoting school improvement and equitable educational opportunities for all Kentucky children.

Safe schools strategies

In the wake of recent school shootings across the nation, the U.S. Department of Education is offering a one-hour webcast to provide school administrators with an opportunity to review key considerations related to school emergency management planning. The program is archived to allow viewing at any time.

The department's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools shares successful strategies on what schools can do to help mitigate, prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from a crisis.

The archived webcast can be viewed at www.connectlive.com/events/edschoolsafety.

Transition to Teaching

More Kentucky school districts are turning to the Transition to Teaching program to fill teacher vacancies in high-need subject areas. Currently, nine districts employ classroom teachers who are part of the alternative certification program.

According to Candace Souder, who coordinates the program for the Kentucky Department of Education, "The goal of the Transition to Teaching program is to recruit and retain highly qualified individuals to meet the needs of high-need, high-poverty Kentucky school districts in specific subject areas." Those areas include: mathematics, science, language arts, social studies/government, arts and humanities, special education, English as a second language (ESL) and foreign language.

In the past two years, the Fulton County School District, which has struggled from time to time to find highly qualified and certified applicants, has employed five Transition to Teaching participants. "From what I have seen so far, I am very content that they are going to be great teachers," said Fulton County Superintendent Charles Holliday. "They care about kids, they have a commitment to building relationships with students, they have a commitment to making sure that students reach the high expectations they have established for those

students, and they also have very high expectations established for themselves." He said the program has helped cut down on the number of emergency certifications his district has sought to fill vacant teaching positions.

Through the Transition to Teaching program, a district can hire mid-career professionals, paraprofessionals or recent college graduates who have not completed a teacher preparation program to teach while they take the necessary coursework to earn alternative certification.

"I think it will allow us to recruit people who are committed to our district, who know and understand our demographics, who have a passion for our children and our students, and who will make a commitment to us" said Holliday.

One stipulation of the program is that candidates make a three-year commitment to teach in the district where they are hired. "I'm thrilled that we are able to be a part of this program. It has already had a significant impact on us, and I contend that it will well into the future," Holliday added.

The Transition to Teaching Program is funded through a U.S. Department of Education grant administered by the Kentucky Department of Education. For more information contact: Candace Souder, Division of Educator Quality and Diversity, at (502) 564-1479 or by e-mail at candace.souder@education.ky.gov.

Leadership Kentucky nominations sought

Leadership Kentucky is seeking nominations for its class of 2007.

The leadership development program selects 50 to 55 of the state's current and future leaders in various occupations to examine issues facing Kentucky. The class will meet for seven sessions and discuss topics such as demographics, education, economic development, arts, and health and human services.

Participants are selected based on their proven and potential leadership abilities, civic activity, concern for the community, volunteer leadership and potential to help build a greater Kentucky.

To learn more about the program or for a nomination form, visit www.leadershipky.org.

Rural Scholars Program

The Foundation for Excellent Schools is looking for 10 schools to participate in a three-year initiative that will help hundreds of underserved youth take steps to prepare for, access and graduate from college.

Through the National Rural Scholars (NRS) Program, schools will work alongside a college or university to ensure that at least 50 low-income students from the school receive academic support, practical advice and counseling needed to choose the right college and successfully get through the admissions process.

"The path to graduation and higher education can be an obstacle course for any student, but it's particularly difficult for young people from low-income rural communi-



Talk to Us!

Kentucky Teacher wants to know what you think, what you need from the Department of Education, what you want to see in future issues.

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ties, many of whom are the first in their families to go to college," said FES President Rick Dalton. "Through the National Rural Scholars Program, we can help these young people connect with mentors who inspire them to make the academic progress needed to graduate and be admitted to college."

Schools interested in participating in the National Rural Scholars Program should complete applications by Feb. 1.

www.fesnet.org

Safe Routes to School grant applications

School districts are eligible to apply for grants to improve sidewalks, bike paths or traffic patterns within two miles of an elementary or middle school through the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program.

The national program is designed to encourage children to walk and bicycle to school; to make those activities safer and more appealing; and to facilitate projects and activities that will reduce traffic, fuel consumption and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

Funds also may be used for non-infrastructure projects such as bicycle and pedestrian safety curricula, training and costs for additional law enforcement or enforcement equipment.

Funding applications will be accepted from Jan. 1 through March 15. Applications are available on the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Web site.

www.saferouteskentucky.com



Photo by David Bryan, Creative Services

Henry Vogt Heuser Jr. thanks members of the Kentucky Board of Education after receiving the Joseph W. Kelly Award for outstanding leadership and service to Kentucky public education.

Team teaching proves valuable in delivering content to students

By Faun S. Fishback

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From the moment Bernheim Middle School science teachers Jennifer Harrison and Gayle Katzman entered the classroom in their tie-dyed lab coats, students at this Bullitt County school knew science class might be a little different this year. For the first time, the two teachers who teach different grade levels of science were combining their classes and using team teaching to help their students learn more

tablets, food coloring, Play-Doh, vinegar, Mentos candies, soft drinks and pennies so that students could replicate the experiments at home, if they wanted. Other experiments were not for amateurs, like cooking an egg with the heat released during an experiment using calcium oxide and freezing roses and balloons with liquid nitrogen.

The classes worked inside the school on most experiments. However, when the teachers knew something would spew and make a mess, students headed for the outdoor classroom recently completed on the school campus. Harrison and Katzman have posted photos of the experiments on the school Web site.

"You can't be scared of science or think experiments are too difficult to do," said Harrison. "When you team teach, the students see you relaxed and having fun. They relax and learn."

Katzman pointed out that several valuable lessons were learned during team teaching the unit this fall. Harrison teaches four 6th-grade science classes. Katzman teaches a full day of 7th- and 8th-grade science.

To combine their classes for the unit took some swapping of class time with other content teachers, Katzman said. She expects the Bernheim

Middle faculty will begin looking at the block schedule used at the school to make it more conducive to team teaching.

"We need to evaluate our science content (across the middle school grades) to see where we can do more team teaching," Katzman said, "and to see where we can do more collaborating with other content teachers."

As part of the physical and chemical changes unit, the science students created a textbook or children's book – complete with illustrations – that she will share with the language arts teachers. She said some open-response writing done for the science unit could be extended to portfolio pieces.

"Here and there throughout the unit, we discovered little things that will improve our teaching and students' learning," she added.

It appears their team-teaching plan was a success. Students arrived at class on time and stayed interested in the work, the teachers said. Most importantly, the end-of-unit assessments showed students mastered the content.

"Parents said our classes were the dinner table conversation while we were team teaching," said Harrison. "You know it's a success when students are talking about it at home."

MORE INFO ...

www2.bullittschools.org/bms/Science%20Experiences.htm

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Photo by John Roberts, Bullitt County Schools

When teachers Jennifer Harrison, left, and Gayle Katzman wear their tie-dyed lab coats, Bernheim Middle School science students know they're going to learn something new about physical and chemical changes like this experiment that involved immersing everyday items in liquid nitrogen.

about physical science.

As a department, the four science teachers at Bernheim Middle delved into student data from last spring's Kentucky Core Content Tests and found that students just weren't mastering the content of physical and chemical changes. The teachers decided to shake things up this year by team teaching the content.

The Katzman/Harrison team was determined to raise the student excitement level through a variety of experiments that would extend student learning. Guided by the adage that "seeing is believing," this teaching duo gathered classroom activities from a workshop last summer at the Louisville Science Center and suggestions from a science educators' listserv for their unit of study.

The teachers used mostly common, household items like Alka-Seltzer



Katzman and Harrison took students to the outdoor classroom at Bernheim Middle when experiments in the physical and chemical changes unit were going to be messy or smelly.



Crawford Middle School is targeting 87 in 2007

By Faun S. Fishback

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Crawford Middle School Curriculum Specialist Darlene Combs usually doesn't come to school dressed in a referee's shirt with black stripes and a big red 100 for proficiency on it. Principal Joyce Florence has never worn a formal gown and blonde wig to school. And a black suit and tie aren't Associate Principal Chuck Bayless' normal school attire.

But the three dressed this way earlier this school year as part of the Fayette County school's Academic Pep Rally to motivate students to do their best all year long on classroom assignments and tests, not just in the spring when state assessments are given.

"I am new to Crawford this year," Combs explained. "In analyzing our test data, I discovered that as a school we had 87 blank open-response items and 54 blank multiple-choice items on the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) last year. We analyzed that our academic index could have been more than 84 if the students had just scored a '1' on those blank open-response items."

That revelation, Combs said, ignited faculty enthusiasm for a program to prepare students to answer every question on the state assessments. The faculty planned the Academic Pep Rally to explain to each of the school's nearly 550 students the need to be successful in class every day and to announce the school's academic index goal of 87 for the 2007 KCCT.

"We see no reason why this goal can't be reached and exceeded," she added.

The pep rally introduced the Crawford Middle campaign: "87 in '07." Principal Florence, Combs and a cast of faculty members honored students who scored proficient and distinguished on last spring's state assessments. They led cheers and provided music to heighten student enthusiasm for doing better during the 2006-07 school year.

The event also kicked off a new rewards program at Crawford Middle: Students get rewards for scoring all "4s" on classroom work each month. There are Honor Roll Breakfast events each nine-week grading period, and students get other rewards for "good faith efforts," Combs said.

Faculty members take turns leading a morning assembly to provide something uplifting for students every day. Teachers recognize student academic achievements, offer academic advice, discuss work ethic, talk about behavior or explain one of educator Ron Clark's "essential 55" for success in the classroom.

"We send the students off to class each morning with a positive word of advice," Combs said.

Posters around the school remind students: "No Blanks – No Zeros" and "You miss all the shots you do not take ... You miss all answers you leave blank." In addition, teachers have developed posters for classrooms to help students with on-demand writing and to offer tips on scoring a "4" on open-response questions.

Combs also created a Web site for Crawford teachers to give them tools to help their students succeed. Kentucky educators can access the information at www.staff.fcps.net/dcombs.

"We want the students to give good effort all year long," Combs said. "Our teachers are jumping right on these students who are leaving test items and everyday assignments blank by enforcing class and teaching team interventions."

In extreme cases, teachers can refer students to Combs for conferencing. "I give the students a pep talk, and they sit right there in my office until their answers are completed and they are good answers," she said. "We no longer accept students saying, 'I just don't want to do it.' We really are being proactive with our students. We are trying to make a difference in their everyday work ethic and student achievement."

MORE INFO ...

www.staff.fcps.net/dcombs

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Photo by Matt Murphy, Bernheim Middle School